

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 00839 201930Z

22

ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8904

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EALR, ECON, EEWT, ENRG, ETRD, CZ, UR, COMECON

SUBJ: SOVIET ABOVE QUOTA SHIPMENTS OF CRUDE
OIL TO CZECHOSLAVAKIA

REF: PRAGUE 0097; 75 MOSCOW 4809

1. PRAGUE'S EVALUATION OF STATEMENT BY CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIAL THAT
USSR WILL PROVIDE CZECHOSLAVAKIA WITH FOUR MILLION TONS OF
CRUDE DURING 1976 -- OVER AND ABOVE
NORMAL AMOUNT SHIPPED UNDER REGULAR BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT --
STRIKES US ALSO AS TELLING INDICATION OF SOVIET INTEREST IN
KEEPING CZECHOSLOVAK ECONOMY ON EVEN KEEL AND LESSENING IMPACT OF
HARD CURRENCY CRUNCH ARISING FROM NEED TO BUY IN WORLD MARKET.

2. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT ONE ELEMENT OF CZECHOSLOVAK COOPERATION
WITH USSR IN JOINT ENERGY PROJECTS, AS PAYMENT FOR EXTRA OIL,
MAY BE ITS REPORTED AGREEMENT, PROBABLY EARLY IN 1975, TO
CONSTRUCT A SECTOR OF CRUDE-OIL PIPELINE IN USSR. THIS
DEVELOPMENT FIRST REACHED US HERE FROM SOURCE IN ROMANIAN
EMBASSY MOSCOW WHO BROUGHT IT UP DURING DISCUSSION OF SOVIET
REFUSAL TO DELIVER CRUDE TO ROMANIA (MOSCOW REFTEL.). SINCE
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 00839 201930Z

THAT TIME, EXISTENCE OF CZECH PROJECT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY

SOVIET SOURCE IN MOSCOW'S INSTITUTE OF WORLD SOCIALIST
ECONOMY. IT IS APPARENTLY SIMILAR TO PROJECT BEING UNDER-
TAKEN BY POLAND IN SOVIET BALTIC STATES, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE
NO INFORMATION ON ITS EXACT LOCATION. NOR HAVE WE NOTED
ANY MENTION OF CZECH PROJECT IN SOVIET PRESS, UNLIKE POLISH
PROJECT WHICH WAS REPORTED BRIEFLY IN DECEMBER 1974.
STOESSEL

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